

Subject: Summary of the County's Town Hall for the CAP and LUCE Kick-off

On May 13, 2010, the County of San Luis Obispo hosted a Town Hall event to solicit input on the update of the Land Use and Circulation Element and the development of a Climate Action Plan. The following summary outlines the content of the event as well as the key themes that emerged from the participant response. A complete record of comments received follows the summary portion of this memorandum as an appendix.

EVENT SUMMARY

The event's doors opened at 6 p.m., with half an hour allotted for participant networking and sign-in/sign-up. Participants were asked to be seated at 6:30 p.m. Long Range Planning Manager Chuck Stevenson provided a brief introduction to the projects and introduced Supervisor Adam Hill. Supervisor Hill provided a "big picture" overview of the role of these planning projects for the County.

Following Supervisor Hill's remarks, meeting facilitator Nora De Cuir introduced the evening's agenda and led participants through an electronic polling exercise that focused on shared values. Polling covered the subjects of rural landscapes, transportation, water, and energy. The polling activity was for use at the meeting only. Polling was followed by a short raffle of energy and water conservation kits.

The facilitator then introduced the County and PMC consultant project management team to provide the technical overview of the Climate Action Plan and Land Use and Circulation Element (LUCE) update. On behalf of the County, Jamie Lopes presented an introduction to the LUCE update. Tammy Seale, on behalf of the County and consultant team, presented an introduction to the Climate Action Plan process. Each presentation focused on the purpose and scope of the respective project.

The large group of meeting participants was then briefed on the next small-group activity and dismissed to their assigned activity station. An hour was spent at the five activity stations, with participants rotating between stations so that each participant visited and participated at all stations. Key results from each are summarized below, and a full record of activity station responses is included as an appendix to this memorandum.

Finally, participants were gathered back together as a large group for a final raffle and concluding remarks. Participants were shown opportunities to continue to participate in the planning process through the project website and by contacting staff.

The event adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

SMALL-GROUP ACTIVITY STATION SUMMARY

Town Hall participants spent approximately ten minutes at each of five stations: (1) water, (2) energy, (3) land use #1, (4) transportation, and (5) land use #2. The following summary highlights the key results from each station.

Water

Participants at the water station provided information about where their water comes from, where it should come from, and concerns they have about their water supply and conservation efforts. The following key points were frequently mentioned by participants in their written responses at the station:

- Concerns with groundwater supply
- The rising cost of water
- Belief that their water comes from outside the county
- Stories of their own water supply—such as a decrease in well levels in recent years
- Opportunity for desalination plants
- Indications that they are already conserving and suggestions for ways to conserve and reuse water

Energy

Participants at the energy station were asked to share more information about their household conservation efforts using a handout that described common conservation techniques. The following table summarizes the participant response.

Household conservation effort	Percentage of respondents participating in each conservation effort
Turn off lights when not in use	100%
Unplug appliances when not in use	46%
Reduce use of electronic appliances	64%
Use of energy-efficient appliances or light bulbs	96%
Strategic use of shades or curtains to retain or repel heat	75%
Generate or capture energy at home for electricity, water heating, etc.	33%
Insulate drafty areas such as attics	57%
Trees and vegetation cool the home	55%
Cool roofs or high-albedo paints reduce building heat	13%
Use low-flow showerheads and toilets	88%
Landscape with drought-tolerant plants	66%

Household conservation effort	Percentage of respondents participating in each conservation effort
Use drip irrigation or other water-conserving landscape irrigation systems	64%
Water is captured on-site to recharge groundwater	24%
Minimize waste sent to the landfill	85%
Recycle	100%
Compost	58%
Use your own home-generated compost in the yard	57%

Land Use 1

Participants at the first land use station were asked to share more information about where they “live, work and play,” through the placement of color-coded dots on a map of the county. The resulting map is shown below.



Transportation

Participants at the transportation station were asked to share information about their commute patterns as well as provide feedback on what would encourage them to use their car less. The following tables summarize the responses related to how often and for what purpose respondents use various transportation modes.

How do you get to work or school?			
Walk	Bike	Public Transportation	Car
17	17	3	30

How do you get to the grocery store?			
Walk	Bike	Public Transportation	Car
9	11	0	50

How far do you live from work?					
Time	Total	Walk	Bike	Public Transportation	Car
5 minutes	25	4	6	0	2
10 minutes	16	1	2	0	6
30 minutes	11	0	3	0	7
45 minutes	5	1	0	1	1
60 minutes	2	0	1	0	1
60+ minutes	2	0	0	0	2

How far do you live from your favorite shopping, dining and other services?					
Time	Total	Walk	Bike	Public Transportation	Car
5 minutes	27	5	5	0	4
10 minutes	29	4	1	0	11
30 minutes	6	0	2	0	3
45 minutes	1	0	0	0	1
60 minutes	1	0	0	0	1
60+ minutes	1	0	0	0	0

How far do you live from parks and recreational opportunities?					
Time	Total	Walk	Bike	Public Transportation	Car
5 minutes	23	5	4	0	3
10 minutes	19	2	1	0	5
30 minutes	15	0	1	0	7
45 minutes	2	1	0	0	1
60 minutes	0	0	0	0	0
60+ minutes	0	0	0	0	0

Participants were also asked to provide feedback on what might motivate them to drive less and walk, bike, or ride the bus more. The following key themes emerged through the written responses at the station:

- Better bike safety is needed
- More dedicated bike paths (Class I) are needed
- More carpooling and car-sharing options are desired
- More bus lines, routes, greater frequency, and extended hours are needed
- Jobs and housing closer together would help get people out of their cars
- More express buses are needed
- More options for telecommuting are needed
- More bicycle support amenities such as showers and bike racks are needed

Land Use 2

Participants at the second land use station were asked to share information regarding the housing type they currently call home and their anticipated future housing needs. The tables below summarize the responses regarding both their existing and future housing needs.

Which of the examples below most resembles where you live now?	
Large lot rural residential	9
Large lot single-family residence	11
Residential single-family detached	26
Single-family attached	5
Multi-family development	11
Mixed-use development	1

Which of the examples below most resembles where you would like to live in 10 years?	
Large lot rural residence	12
Large lot single-family residence	17
Residential single-family detached	18
Single-family attached	2
Multi-family development	8
Mixed-use development	6

Participants at the second land use station were also asked to identify similar and unique areas of the county on a map with colored pens/pencils.

All meeting materials are available for review upon request to the County Department of Planning and Building.